DALLAS – U. S. gymnast [Shawn Johnson](http://content.usatoday.com/topics/topic/People/Athletes/Olympic+Sports/Shawn+Johnson) has accomplished plenty in her career, from winning three silvers and one gold medal at the 2008 Beijing Games to paso dobling on "Dancing With the Stars." But her message about body image and self esteem carries just as much significance.

"At my heaviest all the tabloids said some pretty hurtful things," said Johnson, who lost 25 pounds since launching an Olympic comeback. After three years away from international competition, Johnson, 20, is hoping to compete in London this summer.

Johnson said people were accustomed to seeing her with 6% total body fat. They weren't used to seeing Johnson look like a normal chocolate cake, ice-cream eating teenager.

"That whole process kind of broke me down and taught me something," Johnson said Monday at the Olympic Media Summit. "People put too much emphasis on looks."

Reading the criticism - just Google "Shawn Johnson and fat" - knocked her off balance. "I was always on top. I wasn't used to being the critic's choice." The experience made her more resilient, teaching her "how to stay strong when other people don't want you to (succeed)."

In a sport where body frame matters, Johnson was cast against type. Her 4-9 frame was more fireplug than sprite. Even on "Dancing with the Stars," the judges wanted her to be more like another competitor, Playboy model [Holly Madison](http://content.usatoday.com/topics/topic/People/Celebrities/Holly+Madison).

In gymnastics, where struggles with anorexia and bulimia aren't unusual, Johnson's message about body image resonates.

"We're taught at such a young age that you can always be better and that you're never perfect and that you're never good enough," she said. "You find your worth in someone else and what they say just from having looked at you. It's hard. I was at the [Olympic Games](http://content.usatoday.com/topics/topic/Events+and+Awards/Sports/Olympic+Games) winning medals and I still doubted my image. I doubted what I looked like. That's sad. Girls should be taught different than that. I think everyone should be taught different than that."

Answer these questions in complete sentences:

1. Who is Shawn Johnson?

2. What is she famous for?

3. Why have people said "hurtful things" about her?

4. How did Johnson feel about her body image even when she was winning Olympic medals?

5. Why did Johnson lose weight? Was it because of what people said about her, or for another reason?

6. Do you think it is fair she is judged based on her body image?